

# IMPROVING WRITING SKILL IN WRITING RECOUNT TEXT THROUGH DIARY WRITING

Vita Ningrum<sup>1</sup>, Ferry Rita<sup>2</sup>, Hastini<sup>3</sup>

## Abstract

The research was aimed at proving whether diary writing is effective to improve students' skill in writing recount text or not. The research was pre-experimental research design. The population of this research was the tenth grade students at SMA Alkhairaat Kalukubula and the sample was class XA. The number of the sample was 25 students. The researcher employed cluster sampling and adopted one group pre-test and post-test design. The pre-test was used to measure the students' skill in writing recount text before treatment, and post-test was used to measure the students' skill after the treatment. Based on the result of both tests, the researcher found that the t-counted was 8.56. The level of significance counted is set up at 0.05 and the degree of freedom (df) of the table is  $25 - 1 = 24$ . The researcher found that t-table was 2.064. It showed that t-counted was higher than the t-table. It means that the hypothesis of this research is accepted. In conclusion, the use of diary writing was effective to improve the students' skill in writing recount text.

**Keywords:** Writing Skill; Recount Text; Diary Writing.

## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays in Indonesia, all of the students at schools from primary school to university learn English as a foreign language. The purpose of learning English is that students can communicate in English both oral form and written one. Especially in senior high school level, the students learn all English language skills like speaking and writing. Writing is one of the four language skills. As stated by Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983:149), "Writing should reinforce and help extends the listening, speaking, and reading skills". Writing as one of the four language skills is part of syllabus in English teaching. It can be seen from the curriculum 2004, standard competency of senior high school (Depdiknas:2003) starting the aim of English teaching is "Siswa mampu mengembangkan kemampuan dalam bahasa Inggris dalam bentuk lisan dan tulisan. Kemampuan

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<sup>1</sup> Email: [ningrum.vita92@gmail.com](mailto:ningrum.vita92@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Email:

<sup>3</sup> Email: [tini\\_firhansyah@yahoo.com](mailto:tini_firhansyah@yahoo.com)

berkomunikasi meliputi mendengarkan (Listening), berbicara (Speaking), membaca (Reading), dan menulis (Writing).”

From the statement above, the researcher concludes that writing can support the others language skills. It means that writing is a complex domain to learn and to teach because it requires many skills. Before doing and making a good writing, the students need to gather much information by listening to other people, doing discussion with others, and reading more books. By writing, the students can deliver their messages to their readers.

To deliver the message, the students have to produce a text by using English. They have to write about what they think in their mind and state it on a piece of paper by using correct procedure. It is supported by Meyers (2005:2) who defines:

Writing is a way to produce language you do naturally when you speak. Writing is speaking to other on paper – or on a computer screen. Writing is also an action – a process of discovering and organizing your ideas, putting them on a paper and reshaping and revising them.

Since writing needs procedure and organization, writing deals with mixture of idea, vocabulary, and grammar. Harmer (2004) states that making good writing is more complex than producing speaking. Different from speaking, writing is more difficult to acquire because there are many aspects related to writing which need to be mastered, such as organization, mechanics, and grammar. Writing involves more than just producing words and sentences, but in writing activity the students should be able to combine words and sentences grammatically into written text. There are many kinds of written text. One of them is recount text.

Recount is a text that retells events or experiences in the past (Astrid,2010). Its purpose is either to inform or to entertain the audience. It is similar to narrative text that also retells an event or an action happened in the past time. Yet, the difference is that narrative text retells about a story that happened in the past and has not been proved while recount text retells about that has been proved.

According to Sugeng and Zaimah (2007:44), the characteristics of recount text are listed below:

1. Recount has a social function of retelling events for informing or entertaining.
2. It is organized chronologically and is built of three elements.
  - a. Orientation: tells who were involved in the story, when, where, and why the story happened.
  - b. Events: tells what happened in chronological order.
  - c. Re-orientation: concludes the experience.
3. Language features of recount.
  - a. The use of nouns and pronouns. (e.g: David, we, her)

- b. The use of action verbs. (e.g: went, run, played)
- c. The use of past tense. (e.g: we went for a trip to zoo)
- d. The use of time conjunction. (e.g: that, first, next, then)
- e. The use of adverbs and adverbs of phrases. (e.g: in my house, two days ago, slowly)
- f. Use adjectives. (e.g: beautiful, slow)

From the explanation above, the researcher concludes that recount text is a kind of a story that retells us about an event, an experience, or an action that happened in the past and it has been proved the truth. It is the unfolding sequence of events over time, and the purpose is to tell what happened. It begins by telling the reader who was involved, where the event took place and when it happened. Related to the purpose of telling the past event, past tense must be utilized in recount text.

Relating to recount text, diary writing is one of media in teaching writing. By diary writing, the students are free to express their ideas, experiences, activities that have happened in their life. The advantages of diary writing in teaching writing recount text are the students can apply the use of simple past tense in context, and they can organize their ideas by using correct grammar, in this case simple past tense, good mechanics, and rich vocabulary. Diary writing has a lot of fun, and can be adapted to a variety of writing experiences.

The tenth grade students at SMA Alkhairaat Kalukubula faced some problems relating to their writing. Here students could not develop their ideas, they did not master the use of grammatical sentence well, and they are lack of vocabulary. Those were the crucial things that they cannot master well. The teachers have to give support and guidance to improve their writing skill. To help the students to improve their writing skill, the teacher should apply a good medium. A good medium in teaching writing could influence students' writing skill. There are many media that could be used in teaching and learning process. One of the media is diary writing in which the teacher would show the students the example of a diary, and also the teacher could ask the students to identify the tenses used on the diary. It will help students to warm up and to organize students' ideas. A teacher of English plays an important role in teaching writing in order to improve students' writing skill. She or he needs to train, motivate, and help the students very often if they found difficulties in writing.

Based on the problems above, the researcher focused on the students' problem in how to develop the idea by using grammatical sentence and mastering the vocabulary particularly in recount text. One of the easy ways that can help the students in developing

the ideas is asking them to start their writing by expressing their feelings, thoughts, ideas, experiences, and so on that they face in their daily life. This can help the students to develop their ideas. It is assumed that this way can be adopted by the students to encourage and to accustom them to write whatever they want to write.

The researcher chose the tenth grade students at SMA Alkhairaat Kalukubula as the sample of this research because she wanted to help them to solve their problems in writing. Besides, the researcher also wanted to prove whether students' skill in writing recount text, covering content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics through diary writing could be improved or not. Then, the researcher formulated the problem statement as follows: *Can the use of diary writing improve writing recount text of the tenth grade students at SMA Alkhairaat Kalukubula?* It is to verify that diary writing can improve the writing recount text of the tenth grade students at SMA Alkhairaat Kalukubula.

## METHODOLOGY

In conducting this research, the researcher applied pre-experimental research design. It is only one group. This group was given treatment as seen in the formula by Arikunto (2010:124) as follows:

$$O1 \quad X \quad O2$$

Where :

O1 : Pre-test  
X : Treatment  
O2 : Post-test

In this research, the researcher took one group as sample and it was given pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was conducted to know the students' basic knowledge while the post-test was conducted to know the improvement of their skill after the treatment. The population of this research was the tenth grade students at SMA Alkhairaat Kalukubula consisting of 2 classes. Each class consisted of 25 up to 27 students. The total number of the students was 52. Sample is a small part of population. Arikunto (2010:118) states "Sampel adalah bagian dari jumlah dan karakteristik yang dimiliki oleh populasi tersebut." In selecting the sample, the researcher applied a cluster sampling. First, the researcher wrote the name of the class in two pieces of paper. Second, the researcher folded them and put them in a glass. Third, the researcher shook the glass and the paper which fell would be the sample of this research. Referring to the title of the research, the researcher found out two

variables: dependent and independent variable. The dependent variable was the students' writing skill in writing recount text and independent variable was the use of diary writing.

Instruments are the tools or aids which are used by researcher in collecting data. In this research the researcher used only one test instrument: pre-test and post-test. Pre-test was given before treatment while post-test was given after the treatment. Both tests were expected to measure the students' improvement in writing skill and to know the effectiveness of diary writing as a medium was given. Pre-test was done by the students before treatment. It tested the students' skill in writing recount text. In scoring each item of writing recount text the researcher used the scoring procedures for writing assessment as follow:

**Table 1**  
**Scoring Rubric of Writing**

No	Writing Components	Score	Explanation
1.	Content	3	Relevant and adequate answer to the task set.
		2	For the most part answer s the tasks set, though there may be some gaps or redundant information.
		1	Answer]]] of limited relevance to the task set. Possibly major gaps in treatment of topic and/or pointless repetition.
		0	The answer bears almost no relation to the task set. Totally inadequate answer.
2.	Organization	3	Overall shape and internal pattern clear.
		2	Underlying structure not sufficiently controlled. Some organizational skills in evidence, but not adequately controlled.
		1	Organizational skill adequately controlled. Very little organization of content.
		0	No apparent organization of content.
3.	Vocabulary	3	Almost no inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Only rare inappropriacies and/or circumlocution.
		2	Some inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Perhaps some lexical inappropriacies and/or circumlocution.
		1	Frequent inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Perhaps frequent lexical inappropriacies and/or repetition.
		0	Vocabulary inadequate even for the most basic parts of the intended communication.
4.	Grammar	3	Almost no grammatical inaccuracies.
		2	Some grammatical inaccuracies.
		1	Frequents grammatical inaccuracies.
		0	Almost all grammatical patterns inaccurate.
5	Mechanics	3	Almost no inaccuracies in punctuation and spelling.
		2	Some inaccuracies in punctuation and spelling.
		1	Low standard of accuracy in punctuation and spelling.
		0	Ignorance of conventions of punctuation and almost all spelling inaccurate.

After doing pre-test, the researcher treated them in order to improve student's skill in writing recount text. The treatment was conducted for eight meetings. After conducting the treatment, the researcher gave post-test to know whether the students' skill in writing recount text can be significantly improved during the period of treatment given or not.

To know the ability of the students, the researcher firstly computed the individual score by using formula recommended by Arikunto (2006:276):

$$\Sigma = \frac{x}{N} \times 100$$

Where :

$\Sigma$  = Standard Score  
 $X$  = Sum of correct answer  
 $N$  = Maximum score  
 100 = Fixed score

The researcher calculated the mean score of students in each test. Then the researcher computed mean deviation between pre-test and post-test, she employed the formula recommended by Arikunto (2006:307) as follows:

$$Md = \frac{\Sigma d}{N}$$

Where :

$Md$  = Mean score  
 $\Sigma d$  = The total score of deviation.  
 $N$  = Number of students

Next, the researcher computed the square deviation by using formula recommended by Arikunto (2006:308) as follows:

$$\sum x^2 d = \sum d^2 - \frac{(\sum d)^2}{N}$$

Where:

$\sum x^2 d$  = the sum of squared deviation  
 $\sum^2 d$  = the sum of deviation

In order to know whether the students', score of pre-test and post-test has significant difference or not, the researcher used the formula recommended by Arikunto (2010:349) as follows:

$$t = \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2 d}{N(N-1)}}}$$

Where :

$t$  = t-test score  
 $Md$  = mean from pre-test and post-test  
 $\sum x^2 d$  = sum of squared deviation  
 $N$  = Number of students

## RESULT

The researcher conducted the pre-test on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The result of pre-test was presented in the following table:

**Table 2**  
**The Students Pre-test Score**

No.	Students' Initial	Cont.	Org.	Voc.	Gram.	Mech.	Total Score	Students' Score
1.	ARN	1	1	1	0	1	4	26.67
2.	ASR	0	0	2	1	1	4	26.67
3.	DS	1	1	1	1	0	4	26.67
4.	DF	0	0	1	1	1	3	20
5.	EDP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6.	FAN	2	2	2	3	2	11	73.33
7.	FRD	0	1	1	2	1	8	33.33
8.	FSL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9.	IBL	0	1	1	0	0	2	13.33
10.	IDR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11.	NRT	0	0	1	0	1	2	13.33
12.	NVS	0	1	1	1	2	5	33.33
13.	NVT	0	0	1	0	0	1	6.66
14.	NA	0	1	1	1	1	4	26.67
15.	MHR	0	0	1	1	2	4	26.67
16.	MNN	0	1	2	1	1	5	33.33
17.	MRI	0	3	2	1	2	8	53.33
18.	MKR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
19.	MFD	1	1	2	1	1	6	40
20.	RWP	0	0	2	1	2	5	33.33
21.	RSI	1	2	2	2	2	9	60
22.	SPI	2	3	1	3	1	10	66.67
23.	SNH	1	2	2	3	1	9	60
24.	WFS	1	1	2	1	2	7	46.67
25.	ZRH	0	0	1	1	1	3	20
<b>Total</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>541.99</b>

Based on the table above, the highest score was 73.33 and the lowest score was 0. After getting the total score of the students, the researcher computed the students' mean score by using the formula below:

$$\begin{aligned}
 M &= \frac{\sum x}{N} \\
 &= \frac{541.99}{25} \\
 &= 21.68
 \end{aligned}$$

From the above result, it can be concluded that the students' mean score in pre-test was 21.68. After conducting the treatment, the students' post-test results are shown as follow:



**Table 3**  
**The Students' Post-test**

No.	Students' Initial	Cont.	Org.	Voc.	Gram.	Mech.	Total Score	Students Score
1.	ARN	3	3	2	2	2	12	80
2.	ASR	3	3	3	2	2	13	86.67
3.	DS	3	3	3	3	1	13	86.67
4.	DF	3	3	3	2	2	13	86.67
5.	EDP	1	3	2	3	2	11	73.33
6.	FAN	3	3	3	3	2	14	93.34
7.	FRD	3	3	3	3	2	14	93.34
8.	FSL	1	2	2	2	1	8	53.33
9.	IBL	1	3	2	3	1	10	66.67
10.	IDR	3	3	2	3	3	14	93.34
11.	NRT	2	3	3	3	1	12	80
12.	NVS	3	3	3	2	2	13	86.67
13.	NVT	3	3	3	3	2	14	93.33
14.	NA	3	3	3	2	2	13	86.67
15.	MHR	3	2	3	3	2	13	86.67
16.	MNN	3	3	3	2	2	13	86.67
17.	MRI	3	3	3	3	2	14	93.33
18.	MKR	2	3	2	3	1	11	73.33
19.	MFD	2	3	2	3	2	12	80
20.	RWP	3	3	3	3	2	14	93.33
21.	RSI	3	3	3	3	1	13	86.67
22.	SPI	3	3	3	2	2	13	86.67
23.	SNH	3	3	3	1	2	12	80
24.	WFS	3	3	3	3	2	14	93.33
25.	ZRH	3	3	3	2	2	13	86.67
<b>Total</b>		<b>66</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>1789.90</b>

After doing the computation, the researcher found that the highest score was 93.33 and the lowest score was 53.33. The writer then calculated the mean score by using the formula below:

$$\begin{aligned}
 M &= \frac{\sum x}{N} \\
 &= \frac{1789.90}{25} \\
 &= 71.60
 \end{aligned}$$

The students' mean score of post-test was 71.60.

From the calculation above, it showed that there were different results in writing recount text between the students' mean score in pre-test and post test. The students' mean score in post-test (71.60) was higher than students mean score in pre-test (21.68). Those showed that students' achievement was greatly increased after the treatment.

After getting the mean score of pre-test and post-test, the researcher continued to count the mean deviation and the square deviation. The result is presented in the following table:

**Table 4**  
**Deviation of the Pre-Test and Post-Test**

No.	Students' Initial	Students Score		Deviation D = (X <sub>2</sub> - X <sub>1</sub> )	D <sup>2</sup>
		Pre-test (X <sub>1</sub> )	Post-test (X <sub>2</sub> )		
1.	ARN	26.67	80	53.33	2844.08
2.	ASR	26.67	86.67	60	3600
3.	DS	26.67	86.67	60	3600
4.	DF	20	86.67	66.67	4444.88
5.	EDP	0	73.33	73.33	5377.28
6.	FAN	73.33	93.34	20.01	400.40
7.	FRD	33.33	93.34	60.01	3601.20
8.	FSL	0	53.33	53.33	2844.08
9.	IBL	13.33	66.67	53.34	2845.15
10.	IDR	0	93.34	93.33	8710.48
11.	NRT	13.33	80	66.67	4444.88
12.	NVS	33.33	86.67	53.34	2845.15
13.	NVT	6.66	93.33	86.67	7511.68
14.	NA	26.67	86.67	60	3600
15.	MHR	26.67	86.67	60	3600
16.	MNN	33.33	86.67	53.34	2845.15
17.	MRI	53.33	93.33	40	1600
18.	MKR	0	73.33	73.33	5377.28
19.	MFD	40	80	40	1600
20.	RWP	33.33	93.33	60	3600
21.	RSI	60	86.67	26.67	711.28
22.	SPI	66.67	86.67	20	40
23.	SNH	60	80	20	40
24.	WFS	46.67	93.33	46.66	2177.15
25.	ZRH	20	86.67	66.67	4444.88
<b>Total</b>		<b>541.99</b>	<b>1789.90</b>	<b>1247.91</b>	<b>82705</b>

After computing the deviation score between pre-test and post-test, the researcher computed the mean deviation of the students' score that presented below:

$$\begin{aligned}
 M d &= \frac{\sum d}{N} \\
 &= \frac{1247.91}{25} \\
 &= 49.92
 \end{aligned}$$

After getting the mean deviation, the researcher computed the sum of square deviation as shown below:

$$\begin{aligned}
\Sigma x^2 d &= \Sigma d^2 - \frac{(\Sigma d)^2}{N} \\
&= 82705 - \frac{(1247.91)^2}{25} \\
&= 82705 - \frac{1557279.36}{25} \\
&= 82705 - 62291.17 \\
&= 20413.83
\end{aligned}$$

After having the sum of square deviation, the researcher needed to analyze the data statistically in order to know the significant difference of the pre-test and the post-test by using t-test formula as shown below:

$$\begin{aligned}
t &= \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\left[ \frac{\Sigma x^2 d}{N(N-1)} \right]}} \\
t &= \frac{49.91}{\sqrt{\frac{20413.83}{25(25-1)}}} \\
t &= \frac{49.91}{\sqrt{\frac{20413.83}{600}}} \\
t &= \frac{49.91}{\sqrt{34.02305}} \\
t &= \frac{49.91}{5.83} \\
t &= 8.56
\end{aligned}$$

From the above computation, the researcher found that the significant difference between the result of students' pre-test and post-test was 8.56.

## DISCUSSION

Related to the result of students' pre-test, none of the students got the highest score. The standard score at the school was 60. The percentage of students who got score lower than 60 was 84%. It means that only 4 students (16%) got score more than 60. In pre-test, there were 1 student who got the highest (4%) and there were 3 students who got the lowest (12%). In doing the pre-test, the students did not know well how to write about recount text paragraph.

To solve the problem, the researcher applied diary writing in order to improve students' skill in writing recount text. In the first treatment, the researcher asked the students to write about something happened to them into a recount text paragraph. It was surprised because none of the students knew how to write a recount text paragraph. After

that, the researcher explained about simple past tense then generic structure of recount text. Also, the researcher showed the example of diary writing in order to make the students know how to start writing about something that they experienced. For each meeting, the researcher asked them to write recount text paragraph based on the generic structure of recount text, it aimed at improving their writing skill through diary writing.

After conducting the treatment, the researcher gave post-test through diary writing, she found that students already understood how to write recount text paragraph. In post-test the percentage of students who got the highest score was 84%. There were 7 students (28%) who got the highest, and there was only 1 student (4%) who got the lowest. In short, students' score was increased from the pre-test to the post-test. By comparing the result of pre-test and post-test, the researcher concluded that the use of diary writing in writing recount text was effective because there was a progress in students' score. There was also a significant progress by comparing the result of t-counted to t-table.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

After conducting the treatment for eight meetings, the researcher found that the use of diary writing can improve students' writing skill in recount text. It is proven by the result of  $t_{\text{counted}}$  (8.56) was greater than  $t_{\text{table}}$  (2.064). It means that diary writing is an effective media of teaching recount text paragraph.

In order to develop the English teaching quality, the researcher would like to share the suggestions for the development of teaching and learning writing especially writing recount text. First, the students should be given more exercises concerning to the material about the past tense. Furthermore, they can write in the form of recount text paragraph using varied words in good construction. Second, the teachers should provide the students a good medium so that the students feel much comfortable when they are asked to write in English. Third, in teaching writing, the teachers should explain to the students about the rule of the media given. Therefore, if students find difficulties in understanding the instruction given, they should ask the teacher for clearer explanation.

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